

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 367

By Black

A RESOLUTION recognizing Donald L. Samuels on the celebration of his retirement.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy person is Donald L. Samuels, who has been serving Tennessee veterans and dependants since 1970; and

WHEREAS, a United States Marine from 1960 to 1969, Don Samuels was discharged for wounds received in a ground assault leading his infantry platoon against North Vietnam Regulars; he lost partial use of his right hand because of these AK47 wounds; and

WHEREAS, among Mr. Samuels's military awards are the Purple Heart Medal, Combat Action Ribbon, Presidential Unit Citation for the 26th Marines 3rd Marine Division and 1st Marine Division, Combat Action Ribbon, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Rifle Expert Badge, and Pistol Expert Badge; and

WHEREAS, after being discharged, Mr. Samuels entered a VA Vocational Chapter 31 Training Program, completing the 2600 hours, and was appointed Supervising National Service Officer for the Disabled American Veterans; and

WHEREAS, in this noble capacity, Mr. Samuels helped thousands of Tennessee veterans obtain their rightful benefits and set up the first Post-Traumatic Stress program at Meharry Medical Center, among many other duties; and

WHEREAS, after retiring from Disabled American Veterans, Mr. Samuels stepped into an advocacy role when he became the Assistant Commissioner for the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs in 1989; and

WHEREAS, currently, Don Samuels is the Department Legislative Liaison; he has brought training to the Department and outreach to communities in Tennessee and has participated in hundreds of veterans programs across Tennessee in this capacity; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Samuels has also served two terms on the Tennessee State Veterans Home Board, with which he helped start State Veterans Homes; he is currently Co-Chair of Operation Stand Down, a homeless veterans program in Nashville that has received national recognition and with which he has worked for fifteen years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Samuels is currently serving as the Disabled American Veterans Volunteer State Adjutant of DAV Department of Tennessee, Hospital Service Coordinator, and Department Service Officer Director; other positions he has held with the DAV include Commander of DAV Chapter 3, National POW/MIA Chairman, and member of DAV National Legislative Interim Committee and many other National Committees; and

WHEREAS, he has met with Congressional legislators in Washington, D.C., regarding legislation affecting veterans for thirty-five years and has testified at Congressional oversight hearings; and

WHEREAS, besides being a life member of the DAV and VFW, Mr. Samuels is also a member of the VA Tennessee Valley Health Care Advisory Board, Vietnam Veterans of America, AMVET S, American Legion Post 5, Khe Sanh Survivors, 3rd Marine Division Associates, Marine Corp League, and Military Order Purple Heart; he is also a Master Mason of the Nashville Doric Lodge; and

WHEREAS, Don Samuels is most grateful for the love and support he has received from his wife, Sandra; his daughters, Deborah and Patricia; his sons, Donald Jr., and Joshua Mark, who are both on active duty with the United States Marine Corps; and his nine grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Samuels has performed his military duties with the utmost skill, dedication, and professionalism; his service can only be categorized as outstanding; and

WHEREAS, Don Samuels is wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the "Volunteer State," and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor Donald L. Samuels for his honorable and astute service to the good people of Tennessee and this great nation as a United States Marine, commend his work on behalf of Disabled American Veterans as the National Second Junior Vice Commander, support his run for a Disabled American Veterans Higher National office, salute his unswerving commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction, and congratulate him on the occasion of his retirement.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.